

the U.S. troop presence by year's end to the under 100,000, with most of the remaining troops to return home by the end of 2007.

The eventual removal of coalition troops from Iraq streets will help the Iraqis, who now see foreign troops as occupiers rather than the liberators they were meant to be. It will remove psychological barriers and the reason that many Iraqis joined the so-called resistance in the first place. The removal of troops will also allow the Iraqi government to engage with some of our neighbors that have to date been at the very least sympathetic to the resistance because of what they call the "coalition of occupation." If the sectarian issue continues to cause conflict with Iraq's neighbors, this matter needs to be addressed urgently and openly—not in the guise of aversion to the presence of foreign troops.

Moreover, the removal of foreign troops will legitimize Iraq's government in the eyes of its people. It has taken what some feel is an eternity to form a government of national unity. This has not been an easy or enviable task, but it represents a significant achievement, considering that many new ministers are working in partisan situations, often with people with whom they share a history of enmity and distrust. By its nature, the government of national unity, because it is working through consensus, could be perceived to be weak. But, again, the drawdown of foreign troops will strengthen our fledgling government to last the full four years it is supposed to.

While Iraq is trying to gain its independence from the United States and the coalition, in terms of taking greater responsibility for its actions, particularly in terms of security, there are still some influential foreign figures trying to spoon-feed our government and take a very proactive role in many key decisions. Through this many provide some benefits in the short term, in the long run it will only serve to make the Iraqi government a weaker one and eventually lead to a culture of dependency. Iraq has to grow out of the shadow of the United States and the coalition, take responsibility for its own decisions, learn from its own mistakes, and find Iraqi solutions to Iraqi problems, with the knowledge that our friends and allies are standing by with support and help should we need it.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that after Senator REED is recognized—the chairman and I have talked about this—at that point, the Dorgan amendment be the matter before the Senate. I believe that the Senator from Virginia and I have agreed that Senator DORGAN would be recognized for 10 minutes, to be followed then by the chairman for 5 minutes, and the intention then would be to proceed to a rollcall vote.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, we are fully in concurrence as managers, but I would like to have the benefit of our leaders and the respective staff working up a unanimous consent agreement precisely outlining that. Then, as I further discussed with my colleague from Michigan, we had hopes that the matter raised by the Senator from Florida, Mr. NELSON, in which he had an amendment relating to the issue of amnesty, be addressed together with the side-by-side amendment by the Senator from Kentucky, Mr. MCCONNELL. So I hope that while hearing from our colleague from Rhode Island addressing the Senate, we can have a formalized UC agreement.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2766, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2766), to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McCain amendment No. 4241, to name the Act after John Warner, a Senator from Virginia.

Nelson of Florida/Menendez amendment No. 4265, to express the sense of Congress that the Government of Iraq should not grant amnesty to persons known to have attacked, killed, or wounded members of the Armed Forces of the United States.

McConnell amendment No. 4272, to commend the Iraqi Government for affirming its positions of no amnesty for terrorists who have attacked U.S. forces.

Dorgan amendment No. 4292, to establish a special committee of the Senate to investigate the awarding and carrying out of contracts to conduct activities in Afghanistan and Iraq and to fight the war on terrorism.

Kennedy amendment No. 4322, to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage.

Frist amendment No. 4323 (to Amendment No. 4322), to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit taking minors across State lines in circumvention of laws requiring the involvement of parents in abortion decisions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. REED, shall be recognized to speak for up to 20 minutes.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise this morning to discuss the fiscal year 2007 Defense authorization bill. I am glad it is on the floor. It is very important legislation, and it is arriving in a timely manner where we can dispose of it along with the other body and hopefully conclude in the next few weeks with a finalized Defense authorization bill.

I would also note that this is Senator WARNER's last bill as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and I personally want to commend him and thank him for his leadership, not only as the chairman of this committee, but as a young sailor, a young marine, and a more mature Secretary of the Navy, and now a mature Member of the United States Senate. So thank you, Senator, for your leadership and friendship.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Rhode Island. I appreciate his remarks, a Senator with a

very distinguished military record of his own, and quite modest about it. But at some point I would love to have a colloquy with the Senator on why Rhode Island—we are talking about sovereignty and the formation of governments—about why did they hold out those many years before ratifying the Constitution? At some point, could the two of us have a colloquy about that?

Mr. REED. I would be happy to do that, in the future.

I would like to highlight some of the aspects of the bill which I think are very important. I have had the privilege of working with Senator CORNYN as the ranking member of the Emerging Threats Subcommittee. It has been a real pleasure. He has conducted the committee with great efficiency and great cooperation. The staff has been particularly helpful on a bipartisan basis.

I am pleased to note that in the context of our deliberations, several important measures were included in this legislation. First, we have authorized an additional \$400 million for science and technology programs. The original request sent by the Department of Defense was woefully inadequate. Science and technology is the key to our future on the battlefield as we match the skill and valor of our soldiers with the very best technology. We have to continue this investment. I am pleased that our legislation increases that item by \$400 million.

Also, the bill includes language to require a report to Congress on the testing policies and practices that should be pursued with respect to rapid acquisition programs, spiral development programs, quick reaction fielding programs, and the testing for safety and survivability of deployed equipment. One of the weaknesses, I believe, with the present approach of the Department of Defense is a failure to adequately test and evaluate, and I think that failure has to be corrected and this report will, I hope, put attention on this issue and lead to positive results.

The legislation also urges the Department of Defense to identify and nominate an individual to serve as the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation. This position has been vacant since January 2005. It is a critical position. This individual is the key independent personality in the Department of Defense to look at the testing and evaluation of new equipment. Without this position, the testing emphasis is woefully inadequate in the Department of Defense.

As we put new systems into the military, we have to ensure that these systems are adequately tested. Without an individual with that responsibility and that position and posture within the Department of Defense, we are not providing the appropriate personality and mechanism to do the job.

The bill also establishes the Joint Technology Office to coordinate all DOD hypersonics research programs in